



Abram Bryn Gates Primary School

Attendance and Illness Policy

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Mrs. Joanne Buckler (Chairperson)	

Document Review

The Governing Body will review this policy to ensure that it is appropriate and effective whenever necessary, and not less than once every three years.

Document Control

There is one controlled paper copy of this document located in the School Office. An electronic version is also available on our school website. The master electronic copy is held within the Policies Folder on the Admin PC. The latest issue will be marked with the highest number, ie Issue 2 is later than Issue 1. Files in the process of being edited have the words 'In Progress' in the file name.

All other copies (electronic and paper) are uncontrolled.

Document History

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Issue	Description	Author	Checked	Date
1.0	Reviewed and agreed by staff/approved by Governors.	GT	GT	14/10/20

1. Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. Ensuring that your son/daughter attends school every day is one of the most important things you can do to help them succeed at school. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment. All students should be aiming for 100% attendance and parents' support and encouragement in achieving this is crucial.

The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:-

- attainment in school
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Only the school can 'authorise' absence. The school will not assess all reasons as 'valid'. Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. If your child's attendance continues to be a cause for concern, (regardless of the reason for absence) you should expect to be asked to attend a meeting in school to discuss support appropriate for you and your child.

However, as each case is different, and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case, consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Wigan attendance targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

2. Types of Absence

There are two types of absence:

- **Authorised** – Where the school approves pupil absence.
- **Unauthorised** – Where the school will not approve absence.

School will only authorise absences under the following circumstances: genuine illness, unavoidable hospital/dental appointments, death of a close relative, religious observation and unavoidable circumstances. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

School will not authorise the following absences: over-sleeping, birthdays, trips/treats, looking after family members, parentally-condoned absence, holidays, family functions.

3. Penalties for Absence

If a pupil has been absent from school for at least 10 sessions (5 days) in any term, consideration will be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

4. Arrival and Registration

Our school expects children to arrive from 8.45 am, in time for registration at 8.55 am prompt. Arriving after this time will be marked "late" in the register. If a child arrives after the registration period, he/she must report to the main school office and will be marked in as "late". The registers will remain open for 30 minutes (9.30am). Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Any pupil arriving after this time (9.30am) will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1:15PM.
The registers will close at 1:30PM.

5. Punctuality

Good punctuality is also essential for pupils' progress. Pupils who are late for school miss learning, miss the teacher's instruction for the first lesson and cause disruption to the whole class, as well as the child who is late. Children who are late are often embarrassed and upset at arriving into class late. This attitude develops bad habits resulting in them being unprepared for the world of work.

6. Illness and Reporting Absence

6.1 We understand that, on occasions, pupils may have to miss school due to ill health. We ask that parents adopt a bracing approach to illness and only keep pupils off school when it is absolutely necessary. A common sense approach should be used when deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school.

Parents should ask themselves:

Q) Is your child well enough to carry out the activities of the school day?

If not, keep your child at home.

Q) Does your child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?

If so, keep your child at home.

Q) Would you take a day off work if you had this condition?

If so, keep your child at home.

COMMON CONDITIONS

Most illnesses can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to school will depend on how severe you judge the illness to be. Guidance should be obtained from a health professional where the illness is considered to be outside the parents' experience. If in any doubt, professional medical advice should always be sought. Further advice can be also be obtained online at www.hpa.org.uk

6.2 Parents/carers should contact school by telephone to report a pupil's absence on **(01942) 866392** on the first day of absence by 8.45am informing the school of the reason for absence and indicating the expected date of return.

6.3 When a child is absent, the teacher will record the absence in the register. As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the Admin Officer will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received by 9.30am regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.

6.4 If your child is absent due to vomiting then they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the school.

6.5 A written explanation for the absence should be brought in on the pupil's return and handed in at the school office. The school will request this if it is not produced. Notes received from parents explaining absences should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

6.6 In cases of persistent or prolonged absence, school may require medical evidence, e.g. doctor's certificate to explain the absence.

6.7 If your child's attendance continues to be a cause for concern, (regardless of the reason for absence) you should expect to be contacted by the School Office in school to attend a meeting with a member of staff to discuss support appropriate for you and your child. Alternatively, school will contact Wigan Local Authority Attendance Officers for assistance in this matter.

6.8 School will liaise with the Local Authority and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to outside agencies.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact school on a child's first day of absence, if the school has not heard from a parent of a child who is absent by the time registers close (30mins) school will attempt to contact parents in order to verify reason for absence.

Continued (or sporadic) ongoing Absences

Every opportunity will be made to contact parents regarding a child's absence. Failure to do this will result in the school contacting the Local Authority (Startwell) for assistance in this matter. The school will work within Local Authority procedures and recommendations.

7. Pupils who become Unwell at School

If a pupil complains of feeling unwell, the staff will initially monitor their condition and keep them comfortable depending on their symptoms. Sometimes getting some fresh air, sitting quietly for 10 minutes settles the pupil and they may recover.

If a pupil is still feeling unwell, they will be seen by a First Aider. If it is considered that a pupil is not well enough to remain in school, permission will be sought from a member of the Senior Leadership Team to send the pupil home. The parents/carers will be contacted in the order they appear on the school's emergency contact list. It is, therefore, important to keep the school informed of any changes to home/mobile numbers or any change of home arrangements. In the meantime, the pupil will be kept as comfortable as possible until a parent arrives.

In the event of a pupil having an accident during school hours, the first aiders in school will assess the severity of the accident and make the decision to apply first aid, if appropriate. Any significant injury or accident will be reported to the parent immediately (e.g. any head injury) and, on occasions where a prompt response is required, the school may take the decision to call for an ambulance and will notify the parent accordingly.

8. Medical Appointments

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments for pupils outside school hours. If this is not possible, depending on the time of medical appointments, a medical absence request must be completed. Pupils should also return to school after their appointment.

9. Family Holidays in Term Time

Holidays must not be taken during term time. Pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. The Government has made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1st September 2013. The amendment states that Headteacher's may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should apply to the Headteacher in advance. The exceptional reason should be outlined in detail and evidenced. When application is made for authorised absence during term time, the Headteacher gives consideration to:

- the age of the child.
- the nature of the proposed absence.
- the timing of the proposed absence.
- the attendance pattern in the present and previous academic years. Absence will not be authorised where attendance is lower than 95% or where the absence would take attendance below 95%.
- the child's progress.

Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absence for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored. Parents may also be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents / carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time are to be discouraged. Parents will only be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. Authorisation for a holiday in term time will only be given in exceptional circumstances e.g. terminal illness of adult/child.

Attendance Awards

The school recognises good attendance in a number of ways. It is a vital component in the active learners / assertive mentoring programme. 100% attendance awards are given at every half term alongside awards for the best attending class(es), with an overall 100% attendance for the school year being recognised at the end of the school year.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Termly or half-termly letters will be sent home with all pupils giving clear indication of their attendance and how it has been judged. Parents/carers will receive a green, yellow or red letter, indicating their child's attendance level.

Our school's target is: 96%

The Registration System

The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical / Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes and also kept for at least 3 years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers must be safely stored in the school office and given out to the classes at appropriate times.

Appendices

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration